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Allen

Sheaf of

Aeratics.

By the Author

Of
Rocks in the Alps.

Presented to

Mrs. Bessie B. Croft

With the Compliments of the
of Gilbert A. Tracy.

Peterborough

January 2, 1914

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1914.

Winter's Coming.

Gradual, slow, like the gathering haze,
Is the subtle change from the summer days;—
Leaves still whisper in forest ways,
 But the sheaves are gone from the meadow.

Even yet there are flowers in bloom;—
Restless tosses the aster's plume,
Though October has sighed its doom,
 And the sheaves are gone from the meadow.

Vainly, fondly, would we delay
Every smile of the golden day,
Roadside blossom and leafy spray,
 Yellow sheaves in the meadow.

Tender tints may illumine the skies;
Richest odors may drift and rise,
All the beauty of Paradise
Cheat and flatter in summer's guise,
 Yet the sheaves are gone from the meadow.

A Faithful Friend.

Give me a friend whose earnest heart is filled
With honesty and truth; whose steadfast trust
Will never fail, by envious falsehood chilled,
Nor be misled by jealousies unjust.
But few may find a tireless, faithful friend
Tender and patient, open and sincere,
Ready at call to help or to defend,
And sympathize when foes revile and sneer.
Though love may seem more beautiful and dear,
Without sweet friendship it is light and brief;
One is the vernal shining of the year,
When hope and youth read bliss in every leaf.
The other like the later ripper day
When grave experience binds her golden sheaf.
O blest is he who hath one constant friend
Whose tried truth changes not, but lives away
Keeping its loyalty unto the end!

NOTE—The name is revealed by reading the first letter of the first line in connection with the second letter of the second line, and so on through the stanza.

Gift
Mrs. W. A. Crockett
May 5 '22

Looking Backward.

[Acrostic—Telestich]

Go where we may, though far and long we roam,
In northern snows, or sands of Africa,
Loyal to early ties, our thought will veer
Back to the scenes beloved in infancy;
Each favorite childish haunt, remembered well,
Rises to mind, by memory's rosy hue
Transfigured bright; above no land or sea
Arch skies so fair as those we used to love;
Violets and roses are no more the same;
Even the thrush no longer sings as then;
Reality is chill, because, alas,
Youth lends not now its glamour of delight,
To all that meets the eager eye and ear.
Retrace again, O memory, at our plea,
All the glad signs in youth's bright zodiac,
Charm still the hearts which in the dull today
Yearn for the warmth and light of other years!

Midsummer Heat in April--1896.

Midsummer heat ere yet the dawn of May !
April, forgetful that her name is spring,
Rivals the fervor of an August day;
Yet thick with hard brown buds the branches swing,
Leafless, despite the ardor of the sun;
Eager and strong, each germ of promise swells.
And where, two days ago, I found not one
Vestige of coming bloom, the white heart's bells
Edge the bare boulders with their delicate grace;
Near by the saxifrage, poor patient plant,
Seams with its milk-white flowers the cliff's rude face,
Transfiguring the frowning adamant.
Return, O countless crowds of murmuring leaves,
And bring rejoicing birds to charm and cheer;
Comfort our dearth, and to the heart that grieves
Yield the sweet solace of the opening year.

Nightfall in Winter.

Gray shadows drape the heavens, fold on fold;
In densest clouds the sun conceals his light;
Loud sweeps the wind, two edged with frosty cold,
Blinding the window panes ere shut of night.
Even the early lamps of yonder town
Refuse to shine, but with a nebulous glow
Too faint for cheer, as the wild night shuts down,
And all the air is full of whirling snow.
Vainly the eye would trace the beaten road,
Even the river, once so glad and bright,
Runs silent, underneath its deadening load;
Yet does it flow though hidden from our sight;
This thought shall help us, when the bitter gale
Raves round the windows of our fire-lit room,
And dumb and desolate lie wood and vale;
Courage! for earth shall wake to song and bloom,
Youthful and joyous, from its winter tomb!

A New Year's Greeting.

I

Greeting for this new age! A little late—
I had so many trifling things to do;
Life drives us all at such a headlong rate,
Bringing each day some work or burden new,
Else old hard duties to be done again,
Repeated till we falter at the task,
Tired of the evermore-recurring strain,
And, half disheartened, pause awhile, to ask
“Verily, wherefore all this toil in vain?”
Even I, as dull and humdrum as I seem,
Rebel sometimes, and call it useless pain;
Yet when the orchards wake, and May's warm beam
Turns their gray boughs to pink,—or when their fruit
Ripens to red and gold, my thought will be
“Ah, after all, life's charms are past dispute,—
Can I forget, whatever Fate's decree,
Yonder an apple-tree is named for me?”

II

Good comradeship could never farther go;
 I reckon it my happiest compliment;
 Ladies whose hair is growing gray, you know,
 But rarely win one, save by accident.
 Each year hereafter, when the spring comes round,
 Radiant with promise, you will think of me,
 Though I be distant far, or under ground,—
 And link my memory with the apple-tree.
 Vainly I might have sought a sweeter way,
 Even could I have named my choice, to be
 Remembered by my friend of many a day;
 You could not grant a dearer gift to me;
 Truly, I thank you; may your own life be
 Richer and happier with every spring,
 And may this brightly-dawning century
 Crown you with joy, and grant you everything
 You may desire, of all that life can bring !
 January 1, 1901.

(The following poetical note accompanied
a gift to Mrs. Tracy.)

Dear Mrs. Tracy—

With this note I send
A trifling gift,—a grateful memory-proof
From one who found the welcome of a friend
Beneath your kindly roof;—
An easy chair,—the pattern I like best;
Hoping that often, after set of sun,
At the cool hour, you'll sit in it and rest,
When the last chore is done.

ELIZABETH AKERS

July, 1897.

Why?

When, ere the age of paper mills,
The ancients wrote their notes and bills
And duns and letters and receipts
On roughly-pressed papyrus sheets
Made from the tall cyperus reeds
Which flourish where the Nile recedes,
How stupid were their minds and dark!
Why didn't they think of white-birch bark?

*Flow lines were written on
a piece of white-birch bark
by Mrs. Allen to the recipient - G. A. S.*

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